

C. APPLICANT'S COMMENTS

Claims 1-5, 7-19 are pending in this Application, with Claims 6, 18, 19 being canceled, with Claims 1, 17, 18 being amended and Claims 20-22 being added. No new matter is added by way of these amendments, and the amendments are supported throughout the Specification and the drawings. Reconsideration of Claims 1-5, 7-19 and favorable consideration of Claims 20-21 is respectfully requested. The Examiner's rejections will be considered in the order of their occurrence in the Official Action.

Paragraphs 3-4 of the Official Action

The Official Action rejected Claims 17-19 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The Applicant has incorporated the Examiner's helpful suggestions.

Paragraphs 5-7 of the Official Action

The Official Action rejected as-filed Claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by French ('771) and as-filed Claims 1-5, 9, 15, 16 as being anticipated by Bond ('331). The Applicant respectfully disagrees with these rejections for at least the following reasons.

It is important to first briefly discuss 35 U.S.C. §102 and its application to the present application. Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), anticipation requires that the prior art reference both (1) disclose, either expressly or under the principles of inherency, every limitation of the claim, and (2) be enabling thus placing the allegedly disclosed matter in the possession of the public.

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). "The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim." *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989). Hence, under 35 U.S.C. §102, anticipation

requires that **each and every element** of the claimed invention be disclosed in the prior art. *W.L. Gore & Assocs. v. Garlock, Inc.*, 220 USPQ 303, 313 (Fed. Cir. 1983), cert. denied, 469 U.S. 851 (1984). Anticipation also requires the presence in a single prior art reference disclosure of each and every element of the claimed invention, arranged as in the claim. *Lindemann Maschinenfabrik GmbH v. American Hoist & Derrick Co.*, 221 USPQ 481, 485 (Fed. Cir. 1984). In addition, the prior art reference must be enabling, thus placing the allegedly disclosed matter in the possession of the public. *Akzo N.V. v. United States Int'l Trade Comm'n*, 1 USPQ 2d 1241, 1245 (Fed. Cir. 1986), cert. denied, 482 U.S. 909 (1987) (emphasis added).

Independent Claim 1 has the following features:

1. (Currently Amended) A stone cutting system, comprising:
 - a retaining unit having at least one trough for receiving a plurality of stone members, wherein said at least one trough includes a compression member that is capable of compressing a plurality of stone members in a longitudinal manner; and
 - a cutting unit having at least one blade, wherein said at least one blade is capable of being extended within said at least one trough for cutting a plurality of stone members into a plurality of stone pieces.

Newly added independent Claim 20:

20. (New) A stone cutting system, comprising:
 - a retaining unit having at least one trough for receiving a plurality of stone members;
 - wherein said at least one trough includes a floor, wherein said floor includes a plurality of slots that allow for the passing through of a plurality of cut stone pieces; and
 - a cutting unit having at least one blade, wherein said at least one blade is capable of being extended within said at least one trough for cutting a plurality of stone members into a plurality of stone pieces.

Newly added independent Claim 22:

22. (New) A stone cutting system, comprising:
 - a retaining unit having at least one trough for receiving a plurality of stone members; and
 - a cutting unit having at least one blade, wherein said at least one blade is capable of being extended within said at least one trough for cutting a plurality of stone members into a plurality of stone pieces and

wherein said cutting unit is movable in a horizontal manner substantially parallel to said at least one trough.

The Applicant respectfully submits that neither French ('771) or Bond ('331) qualify as appropriate prior art under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as they do not disclose (expressly or inherently) all of the features of independent Claims 1, 20, 22. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that independent Claims 1, 20, 22 is patentable over the cited reference for at least these reasons. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the outstanding rejection as applied to independent Claims 1, 20, 22, since the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the corresponding dependent claims, which depend there from are also in condition for allowance.

Paragraphs 8-9 of the Official Action

The Official Action rejected Claims 19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over French ('771). The Applicant respectfully disagrees with this rejection of these claims, particularly as the same are now amended.

In proceedings before the United States Patent and Trademark Office, the Examiner bears the burden of establishing a prima facie case of obviousness based upon the prior art. *In re Bell*, 26 USPQ2d 1529, 1530 (Fed. Cir. 1993). *In re Oetiker*, 24 USPQ2d 1443, 1444 (Fed. Cir. 1992). When references cited by the Examiner fail to establish a prima facie case of obviousness, the rejection is improper and will be overturned upon appeal. *In re Fine*, 5 USPQ2d 1596, 1598 (Fed. Cir. 1988). "To support the conclusion that the claimed invention is directed to obvious subject matter, either the references must expressly or impliedly suggest the claimed invention or the examiner must present a convincing line of reasoning as to why the artisan would have found the claimed invention to have been obvious in light of the teachings of the references." *Ex parte Clapp*, 227 USPQ 972, 973 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1985).

"To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met." MPEP §706.02(j). First, there must be some **suggestion or motivation**, either

in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a **reasonable expectation of success**. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) **must teach or suggest all the claim limitations**. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art and not based on applicant's disclosure. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

The law regarding *obviousness* is clear -- any modification of the prior art must be suggested or motivated by the prior art. It is submitted that combining elements from different prior art references (in an attempt to establish obviousness) must be motivated or suggested by the prior art.

'Obviousness cannot be established by combining the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention, absent some teaching or suggestion supporting the combination. Under section 103, teachings of references can be combined only if there is some suggestion or incentive to do so.' [citation omitted] Although couched in terms of combined teachings found in the prior art, the same inquiry must be carried out in the context of a purported obvious "modification" of the prior art. The mere fact that the prior art may be modified in the manner suggested by the Examiner does not make the modification obvious unless the prior art suggested the desirability of the modification.

In re Fritch, 972 F.2d 1260; 23 USPQ2d 1780, 1783-84 (Fed. Cir. 1992), (in part quoting from *ACS Hospital Systems, Inc. v. Montefiore Hospital*, 732 F.2d 1572, 1577; 221 USPQ 929, 933 (Fed. Cir. 1984)).

It is also submitted that the mere fact that one may argue that the prior art is capable of being modified to achieve a claimed structure does not by itself make the claimed structure obvious -- there must be a motivation provided by the prior art.

The examiner finds the claimed shape would have been obvious urging that (our emphasis) "it is obvious for one skilled in the art to form each hook base of any desired shape *** since *this is within the capabilities of such a person.*" Thus, the examiner equates that which is within the capabilities of one skilled in the art with obviousness. Such is not the law. There is nothing in the statutes or the case law which makes "that which is

within the capabilities of one skilled in the art" synonymous with obviousness.

The examiner provides no reason why, absent the instant disclosure, one of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to change the shape of the coil hooks of Hancock or the German patent and we can conceive of no reason.

Ex parte Gerlach and Woerner, 212 USPQ 471 (PTO Bd. App. 1980) (emphasis in original).

For these reasons, among others, the combination of French ('771) cannot suggest the combination of features in applicant's Claim 19, particularly as the same are now amended, and it is therefore submitted that the rejection against these claim should be withdrawn and Claim 19 allowed.

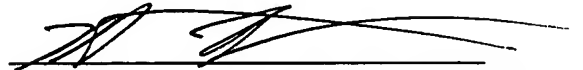
Paragraphs 10-12 of the Official Action

The Applicant has amended the features of dependent Claim 6 into independent Claim 1. Newly added independent Claim 20 has the combined features of as-filed independent Claim 1 and dependent Claim 10. Newly added independent Claim 22 has the combined features of as-filed independent Claim 1 and dependent Claim 17. Independent claims 1, 20, 22 are respectfully submitted to be in condition for allowance pursuant to paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Official Action.

D. CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments and remarks, early reconsideration and allowance of this application are most courteously solicited. Should the Examiner consider necessary or desirable any formal changes anywhere in the specification, claims and/or drawing, then it is respectfully asked that such changes be made by Examiner's Amendment, if the Examiner feels this would facilitate passage of the case to issuance. Alternatively should the Examiner feel that a personal discussion might be helpful in advancing this case to allowance, they are invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael S. Neustel (Reg. No. 41,221)
NEUSTEL LAW OFFICES, Ltd.
2534 South University Drive, Suite No. 4
Fargo, North Dakota 58103

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Date

Telephone: (701) 281-8822
Facsimile: (701) 237-0544
e-mail: Michael@neustel.com




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On April 28, 2005.


MaKell Baumgartner

NEUSTEL LAW OFFICES, Ltd.
2534 South University Drive, Suite No. 4
Fargo, North Dakota 58103

Telephone: (701) 281-8822
Facsimile: (701) 237-0544
e-mail: michael@neustel.com